Source A

Martin Blinkhorn. *Mussolini and Fascist Italy* (1984).

A combination of boldness and negotiation enabled him [Mussolini] to achieve Fiume's incorporation in Italy; the terms of Mussolini's agreement with Yugoslavia consigned Fiume to isolation from its hinterland and consequent economic stagnation, but Italian patriots were ecstatic. Less successful was Mussolini's impetuous occupation of the Greek island of Corfu, which international and especially British pressure forced him to evacuate. Having learnt that he could not yet defy those more powerful than himself, Mussolini for almost a decade did no more than seek to strengthen Italy's position through maintaining good relations with Britain while working to undermine France's alliance system in south-eastern Europe. Crucial to this strategy was his friendly relationship with Austen Chamberlain, one of the many European conservatives who admired the Duce's anti-Bolshevism and imposition of internal "order". Chamberlain's benevolence ensured British acquiescence in the establishment of an Italian protectorate over Albania in 1926 and made possible the cession to Italy of two small pieces of African territory.

Austin Chamberlain was the British Foreign Minister from 1924–29. He was the half-brother of Neville Chamberlain, who became Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1937.

Source B

A cartoon by David Low published in the UK newspaper, the *Evening Standard*, on 29 November 1927.

References the 1927 Geneva Naval Conference, an international meeting where major world powers failed to reach an agreement on limiting their naval armaments, exposing the deep rivalries and superficial nature of European peace efforts during the 1920s.

Source C

Antonio Cippico, Italian politician and writer, in his book of lectures, *Italy: The central problem of the Mediterranean* (1926).

This enormous work of internal renovation has been accomplished in only two and a half years. Mussolini's foreign policy is no less worthy of mention. In proof of its attachment to peace the Italian Government has signed eight commercial treaties and other exemplary agreements based on arbitration with a large number of states. She, alone, amongst the European Powers, has signed twelve out of the seventeen conventions submitted by the International Labour Bureau of Geneva. This is the only European nation that desired that both houses should legally sanction the obligation of the eight-hour day. By the episode of the bombardment of Corfu she gave the world the proof, beside that of her will to be respected in all parts of the world, of her great moderation. During the long and tedious treaties with Yugoslavia she has given ample proof of her good will. In her relations with the League of Nations the Fascist government wished to display the high consideration in which she holds it, when, less than a year ago, she gave me the honourable charge of announcing at the General Assembly of the League at Geneva the offer of founding an Institute for the unification of private law, to be established at Rome at Italy's expense under the auspices of the League.

Source D

Denis Mack Smith. *Mussolini* (1983).

The League of Nations could not really appeal to someone bent on upsetting the world community. Sometimes he condemned it as "a holy alliance of the plutocratic nations" against smaller and poorer countries such as Italy. Later, when many of those smaller countries expressed outrage at his bullying over Corfu, he used the almost opposite argument that too many small and "semi-barbarian nations" claimed an equal voice in it, whereas they should learn to keep their place and not interfere with their more civilized neighbours. Though he went on telling foreigners he would do all in his power to support the League, his representative at Geneva was actively sabotaging its work, and Italy remained a member only because he realized that international conflicts

would otherwise be resolved without an Italian voice being heard.

1 a). What, according to Source A, were the key features of Italy's relations with Britain up to 1926? **(3 Marks)**

1 b). What is the message of the cartoonist in Source B? **(2 marks)**

2. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, assess the values and limitations of Source C for historians studying Italy in the 1920s. **(4 marks)**

3. Compare and contrast the views expressed regarding Italian foreign policy in Sources C and D. **(6 marks)**

4. Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree with the following statement? 'Mussolini pursued an aggressive foreign policy in the 1920s'